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MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

IMB trustees initiate rare removal action

RICHMOND, Va. (BP, ABP, and local reports) — Trustees of the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) have initiated an apparently unprecedented action to ask SBC messengers to remove trustee Wade Burleson, a former president of the Baptist General Convention (BGCT) of Oklahoma, over "broken trust" and "resistance to accountability."

"The trustees consider this a rare and grievous action but one that was absolutely necessary for the board to move forward in its duties as prescribed by the SBC," said the board's chairman, Tom Hatley, pastor of Immanuel Church in Rogers, Ark., said Jan. 11 following a trustee vote the previous night in executive session, or closed session, to terminate the term of Burleson, senior pastor of Emmanuel Church in Enid, Okla.

"This difficult measure was not taken without due deliberation and exploration of other ways to handle an impasse between Wade Burleson and the Board. In taking this action, trustees addressed issues involving broken trust and resistance to accountability, not Burleson's opposition to policies recently enacted by the board," Hatley said.

The mission board's move to ask the Southern Baptist Convention to act follows the IMB charter's process for removing a trustee. A check of SBC records shows that in recent history there has been no action to remove a trustee of an SBC entity.

Burleson was reporting on his encounters with trustees during the board's Jan. 9-11 meeting in Richmond, Va., via his online weblog, or "blog," kerussocharis.blogspot.com. A blog is a type of Internet journal that is frequently updated with personal views intended for public consumption.

Burleson posted entries on his blog after the trustee action Jan. 11, and, earlier, on Monday and Tuesday of the board meeting. Two men who also have blogs but are not IMB trustees gave Internet reports of the meeting, too.

The impetus for the reports by Burleson and the other two men was their opposition to missionary personnel policies, which the trustees adopted during their Nov. 14-17 meeting in Huntsville, Al. The policies involved believer's baptism by immersion

and the use of a "private prayer language," which also was described as "glossolalia (speaking in tongues)." Burleson, on his blog, has contended that the policies are overly restrictive, even among some Baptists who hold to the inerrancy of Scripture.

IMB President Jerry Rankin, a Mississippi native and graduate of Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton, has said previously that he used a private prayer language while serving on the mission field, and some observers believe the new IMB policy is a slap at Rankin's leadership.

One of the other bloggers involved, Marty Duren, pastor of New Bethany Church in Buford, Georgia, and proprietor of the SBC Outpost blog (sbcoutpost.blogspot.com), reported on the new policy vote in a Dec. 3 posting. Duren said he believed the tongues vote was the result more of a vendetta against Rankin on the part of the Texas trustees than any doctrinal concern. Duren is not an IMB trustee.

"It seems that this had less to do with missionary guidelines and more to do with insulting Jerry Rankin," Duren wrote. "If you truly believe that this is an unbiblical practice, you should have fired him outright rather than this nefarious, insolent move. It is a shame that a vocal minority of trustees, representing an even smaller section of the country, who have a personal dislike for Dr. Rankin would stoop to such a level of using an obviously confusing charismatic practice to further their disdain for the president of the board."

Duren said he had interviewed several trustees who agreed with that assessment. He quoted one, Trustee Johnny Nantz of Las Vegas was willing to go on record, saying, "The issue is not doctrinal, the issue is the removal of Jerry Rankin. This is being used to end his tenure," Duren wrote in a Dec. 5 post. Rankin declined comment on Jan. 16.

"I am greatly saddened by the action taken by the IMB board of trustees. I have yet to be presented with specific allegations but I am willing to respond to the particulars of these allegations should they materialize," Burleson said after the removal vote was announced.

"In recent days I have expressed deep concern with a precedent set by certain IMB Board members who voted to establish IMB missionary policies that reach beyond the guidelines of the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

"Secondly, I have also questioned and brought to the attention of the full board the inappropriateness of certain IMB board members, who in violation of IMB board guidelines, have held private caucuses to develop and craft IMB motions and policy," Burleson said.

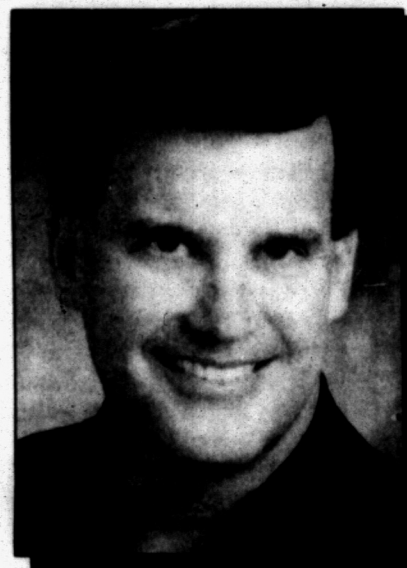
"We must move beyond personal attacks and political power plays. It is my desire to continue serving as a trustee of the IMB, while working in openness and humility with fellow board members as we uphold the integrity of the

greatest missionary sending organization in the history of the world," he said.

BGCT Executive Director-Treasurer Anthony Jordan released a statement on Jan. 12 affirming Burleson's service within Oklahoma.

"While the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma is not privileged to firsthand knowledge regarding the actions taken by the IMB board of trustees concerning Wade Burleson, we can speak to the outstanding service Wade Burleson has and continues to provide to our state convention," Jordan said.

"As a current member of the BGCO board of directors and as a past state convention president, Wade has demonstrated excellent leadership and integrity while exemplifying a passion for reaching the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ," he said.



Burleson

Miss. CP up for year

Mississippi Baptists increased their giving to the work of the Lord in 2005 through the Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) by more than four percent over the previous year, according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which disburses the funds. When the 2005 Mississippi CP year ended in December, Mississippi Baptists had given \$32,322,703 — 3.2% above budget requirements. The December total of \$2,566,058 was 20% lower than the \$3,210,196 given during the previous month, and 1.6% lower than the \$2,607,587 given in the same period in 2004. The 2006 Mississippi CP budget of \$31,314,491, was approved by messengers to the 2005 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. A total of \$2,609,541 is needed each month to meet the convention board's budget for 2006. In addition to helping support more than 10,700 missionaries in the U.S. and around the world through affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, Mississippi CP also helps fund such programs as the Area Keyboard Festivals in the month of January at various locations around the state, and the Mississippi Baptist Church Music Conference February 2-4 at Emmanuel Church, Grenada.

SBC CP down for month

NASHVILLE, Tn. (BP) — Contributions through the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) for December were \$14,622,239, two percent, or \$293,896, below the \$14,916,108 given the previous month, and 2.4%, or \$340,508, above the \$14,281,731 received in December 2004, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President and Chief Executive Officer Morris H. Chapman. Designated giving of \$10,589,328 for the same year-to-date period is two percent, or \$212,872, above gifts of \$10,376,456 received at this point last year. The \$3,670,570 in designated gifts received last month is \$455,314 below the \$4,125,884 received in December 2004, a decrease of 11%. For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date total of \$45,424,990 is 95.7% of the \$47,466,314 budgeted to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America. The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention.



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Abortion: the appalling numbers

Another year, another 1,008,594 humans destroyed. From the Sanctity of Human Life Sunday observance last January to this year's observance last weekend, that's how many children have fallen victim to the American abortionist's perverse skill of dismembering and removing "blobs of tissue" from the wombs of expectant mothers.

As Rick Henson, pastor of Oakdale Church, Brandon, pointed out in last week's Guest Opinion in The Baptist Record, that's 2,736 lives each day in this country that are legally snuffed out — mostly for the convenience of the people involved.

Despite all the high sounding health-and-well-being pronouncements of the groups that make death by abortion sound so ennobling, the simple fact is that this serious surgical procedure has become simply another form of birth control in this country. Far too many women who become pregnant — and the fathers who, after all, are just as responsible — see abortion as simply a way to erase a mistake.

Oops! Have an "accident?" Saddled with an "unwanted" pregnancy? Not ready to become a parent? Want to



SANCTITY STAND — Crosses dot the landscape at Ridgecrest Church, Madison, for the church's Sanctity of Human Life Sunday observance on January 15. Cliff Pace, assistant pastor of Ridgecrest Church, said blank crosses were offered to church members because, "We wanted to give each family in the church an opportunity to participate. We asked them to personalize the crosses with Scriptures. They are intended to memorialize the children who are aborted each year while at the same time sending a message of hope to anyone who may stop and read the Scriptures," he said. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

escape the consequences of an illegal or immoral sex act? There are simple, discreet, little outpatient procedures that can take care of the problem. That is, until next time. And the next, and the next.

Whether by surgery, chemical abortifacient, or the ultra-convenient morning after pill, abortion in America is no longer a "rare," last-ditch decision to

save a mother's physical or emotional health. It's just birth control — grotesque and dangerous birth control, but birth control nonetheless.

Observers estimate that, as a result of our unceasing efforts to stamp out the pestilence of unwanted or embarrassing pregnancies in this country, we have slaughtered 25% of our potential population since the

U.S. Supreme Court opened the abortion floodgates in their 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision.

That's 25% less people in this country in the post-Roe era to keep America strong, vibrant, and a lighthouse for the rest of the world. That's 25% less people to participate in America's future. That's 25% less Little Leaguers, Girl Scouts, valedictorians, and political leaders. That's 25% less of what the Founding Fathers and God Himself planned for us.

Finally, hope is being expressed that the end may be in sight for constitutionally-protected, nationwide abortion on demand throughout the entire nine months of pregnancy. If *Roe v. Wade* is overturned — and even the original "Roe" believes it should be — abortion won't disappear overnight, but the ability to set abortion policy will devolve to the 50 states.

In Mississippi, that would be a good development since pro-abortionists already complain that the state is one of the most restrictive in the U.S. Thanks to our religious and political leadership in Mississippi, who are setting the pace for the rest of the country, there is only one abortion clinic left in the state. One, and counting.

The new year is here! What better time could there be to decide to get in on the joy of sharing Jesus?

It continues to be the stunning truth that most Christians never share their faith and don't see this as a major problem. As a result, our churches are filled with people who think they are there to get their needs met, rather than to be launched as missionaries. More often it means that our churches just aren't filled with anyone at all.

The greatest need for repentance in the church today is not for sexual sin, gossip, or greed. It is for allowing people all around us to go to hell while we ignore them and spend all our time with Christians "growing deeper."

We don't need to be any deeper than Jesus, who loved tax collectors, sinners, adulterers, and lepers and rebuked religious people who kept their distance from them.

Maybe this will be the year when this finally begins to change. I don't think it will happen simply because preachers like me try to make you feel guilty for not sharing Christ. That is not my purpose of this article. I believe it will happen when we finally

GUEST OPINION:

Good News, again!

By John Avant
Vice President, Evangelization
North American Mission Board



get it — that there is no greater joy than sharing our faith; that until we do, we are missing out on the heart of the Christian life and will never know all the wonder and passion Jesus has for us. In short, we are missing all the fun! Remember — the definition of evangelism is to share good news with friends. Who doesn't like sharing

good news? And who doesn't like having friends? All of us can do this. Let it become more than your New Year's resolution. Let it become your New Year's life.

I believe with all my heart that we are about to see our greatest days of the movement of God in our history. I truly believe that the days of turfism and harsh criticism of each other in the SBC are drawing to a close. We are ready for the power of God again!

I want to ask you to stop where you are — right now — and ask God to help you join this mission of joy. Don't let this day go by without making a new friend who doesn't know Christ and sharing the story of what He has done in you.

As we do this together, our lives will become an adventure and our churches will be filled with power. That's what can be ahead for us — if together, we will make evangelism good news again!

Editor's note: The 2006 Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference will be held January 23-24 at Fairview Church, Columbus. For more information, visit www.mbcb.org and scroll down to "Featured Events."

Spanish Pub. House celebrates centennial

EL PASO, Texas (BP) — J. Edgar Davis published his first book in Spanish on a foot-powered press in his kitchen in Toluca, Mexico. From that humble beginning, the Baptist Spanish Publishing House has become a modern, fully equipped enterprise now printing and shipping Bibles, books, and other literature throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

Around 1910, Mexican revolutionary leader Pancho Villa took note of the ministry at a time when he was in desperate need of paper and learned the only supply in Toluca was in Davis' possession. Arriving at Davis' home, Villa demanded use of the paper, even offering to pay for it.

Davis knew he would not be able to acquire any more paper without the revolutionary's consent, so he proposed a deal. Davis would sell Villa half his supply of paper and even print Villa's propaganda, if Villa would allow him to continue using his kitchen press for his own religious purposes. Villa agreed. Davis' young son Frank recalled sitting on Villa's lap as his leaflets came off the press.

As Villa promised, Davis was able to continue printing his Christian literature.

The city of El Paso officially proclaimed Nov. 17 as Baptist Spanish Publishing House Day in honor of the centennial of the world's oldest Spanish Christian publishing house.

The publishing house, which relocated to El Paso in 1916, was operated by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board for its first 94 years. Since 1999, it has been self-supporting with assistance from the Foundation of the Baptist Spanish Publishing House and oversight by an international board of directors.

As part of the centennial celebration, the publishing house opened its new Joe T. Poe Historic Center relaying the



TIES THAT BIND — Mary Wheat, granddaughter of J. Edgar Davis, founder of the Baptist Spanish Publishing House, looks at pictures in the ministry's new Joe T. Poe Historic Center, opened as part of the publishing house's centennial celebration in El Paso, Texas. (BP photo by Scott Lashinsky)

ministry's history via various displays of original furnishings, printing presses, books and other printed materials, photographs and other memorabilia. The center also features an interactive, hands-on program for children on the publishing house's history.

The history center is named for former director Joe T. Poe, the ministry's current historian who has been involved in various aspects of the work for 44 years. Missionary Alicia Zorzoli was in charge of the center's development.

The publishing house's bilingual centennial service was held at First Church and attended by Ted Driggers and Mary Wheat, grandchildren of J. Edgar Davis, along with present and former employees, missionaries, and individuals involved in various related ministries.

Following an invocation by general director Jorge E. Diaz thanking God for 100 years of service, flag-bearers filled the El Paso church's aisle with a colorful parade of flags of many of the nations where Baptist Spanish Publishing House materials now are distributed. The flags were carried by people representing those nations.

Diaz presented former directors and wives who attended the celebration: Tom and Connie Hill, Aldo and Dora Borda, Robert and Margaret Tucker, Roberto and Noemi Garcia-Bordoli, Joe and Eleanor Poe, and Ted and Mary Stanton. He also introduced Jimmie Róss, whose late husband, Wilson, once served as director.

The celebration included sermons by Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board, and Luis Gabriel Cesar, pastor of First Church in Ciudad Satelite, Mexico.

Rankin said he sees evidence of the work of the Baptist Spanish Publishing House everywhere he travels in Latin America. "Remember the past, as you honor those who have

Record

gone before, but also celebrate the future," Rankin exhorted. "Rededicate yourselves to continue this work because of the millions of unreached people in Latin America."

Rankin noted that King David could not rest in his own house until he built a house for God. "Therefore, we must not rest until Christ is known throughout the whole Spanish-speaking world," he said.

Cesar noted that the purpose of the publishing ministry is to change lives and invest in eternity. "Do not stop doing it now," he said. "I remind you that the ministry in which you have invested your lives is long-term. This is a wonderful time to celebrate, but it cannot compare to the glory that is to come."

N.J. hearing pivotal

TRENTON, N.J. (BP) — The New Jersey Supreme Court, one of the more liberal state high courts in the land, will hear a case Feb. 15 that could result in the legalization of homosexual marriage in the Garden State. The case could provide homosexual activists another major victory in the Northeast. In May 2004, Massachusetts became the first American state to legalize homosexual marriage, following a landmark ruling by that state's high court. Another state, Washington, is awaiting a ruling from its state high court. The Washington state Supreme Court heard oral argument in March 2004, and leaders on both sides of the issue say they expect a ruling any week now. If homosexual activists are successful, then three American states will have legalized homosexual marriage by the end of 2006. The homosexual group Lambda Legal filed the New Jersey lawsuit. "For a case seeking to end the government's ban on marriage, it is fitting that we will be standing before the state's highest court during the week of Lincoln's Birthday, which reminds us of how important the principle of equality is to our nation and Valentine's Day, which is about love," Lambda Legal's David Buckel said in a statement. The New Jersey Supreme Court has sided with homosexual activists before. In 1999 it ruled that the Boy Scouts could not prevent homosexuals from becoming troop leaders — a decision eventually overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court. Lambda Legal already has lost twice in New Jersey at trial court level and appeals court level.

Looking back

10 years ago
Southern Baptists' cooperative missions funding is threatened more by changing attitudes in local churches and state conventions than by competitive mission causes, said Larry Lewis, Home Mission Board president.

20 years ago
The Mississippi Baptist Foundation records its largest gift ever when John Wilbanks, founding member of Kendrick Church, Corinth, and former board chairman of National Bank of Commerce, wills bank stock worth over \$1 million to the foundation.

30 years ago
Duke Kembrough McCall is elected to serve as executive secretary of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville, succeeding Austin Crouch.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

**THE SECOND
FRONT PAGE**

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YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer
with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my
sins and freedom from eter-
nal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and
rose from the grave to forgive
my sins and to restore my
relationship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus
Christ into my life. From this
time on, I want to live in a
loving relationship with Him.
(I receive Christ as my Savior
and Lord.)

"But as many as received him,
to them he gave the right to
become children of God, even to
those who believe in his name."
(John 1:12)

If you make a decision for
Jesus Christ today, contact a
local Baptist church for spiri-
tual guidance.

OVERRUNNING OUR HEADLIGHTS

Overrunning your headlights is an interesting thought because it somewhat implies that you can drive fast enough that you will outrun the light shining from your headlights. While we know that cannot happen, what can happen is that you can drive too fast at night and your ability to react to what is seen that few hundred feet out in front of you is restricted to the point where it seems as though you are overrunning your headlights. For many years they could not have races at night because cars would go faster than their drivers were able to see and react. They would overrun their headlights. It seems to me that through the years there have been improvements in night vision and the quality of the headlights on our cars, but there are many other areas of life where we have not recognized that we are overrunning our headlights.

One area that we certainly have moved faster than we can keep up with is in communications. For centuries the way to communicate was limited by how far a sound could be heard in the distance or a sight could be seen. Now with satellite technology and with Internet capabilities we have almost instantaneous worldwide connection. We can communicate at the drop of a thought. Oftentimes we have overrun our headlights, and it would have been better if we had had a second thought about our first thought.

On several occasions I have received e-mail correspondence from individuals who were concerned, upset, or just angry about something. They sat down, typed out some verbiage that would be thrown upon a screen, hit the send button, and zippo, within minutes it came to my desk. Shortly after receiving the first e-mail I received a second e-mail that basically said, "Please disregard the first e-mail." The reason being they had checked, asked, or looked a little further and found that what they were writing about was either in error or had already been taken care of.

When the Scripture says that we are to be "quick to hear and slow to speak," it is talking about just such times, but e-mail allows us to respond before we think, pray, or gather other information. It is a response mechanism that flows about as fast as our emotions and outruns our brains. In communications we have seemed to overrun our headlights.

That seems to be what happened just recently when the tragedy struck in West Virginia and 13 miners were trapped after an explosion. In the middle of the night somebody somewhere picked up bits and pieces of information from the rescuers that had gone down into the mine. The miscommunication had to do with the fact that the miners had been found and one of them was alive. They were



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

not sure about all of the others, but what was communicated was that 12 of them were alive and one had died in the tragedy. Apparently, someone simply grabbed their cell phone, called someone who was at or near the church where everybody had gathered, expressed to them a miracle had taken place, and instant celebration erupted.

The governor of the state, who was at the celebration, turned to his assistant, who was directly connected to the communications, and asked, "What are they talking about?" He replied, "I don't know!" The governor instructed him to try to find out exactly what was going on and what had been discovered. The misinformation had spread so quickly that as he checked he found out that they heard the same thing. An erroneous story not only spread throughout the mining camp, the region, and across the state but literally around the world. I sat a thousand miles away from the scene and watched the live, unfolding of a lie. My heart was moved and thrilled as I watched the miner families who could not contain their joy.

I went to bed thinking what a wonderful, unbelievable, joyful night it was for those folks. The next morning when I got up and turned on the news I heard the heartbreak as the real story came to light. The 13 miners had been found and only one who was still in critical condition was alive. Our communication skills had permitted us again to overrun our headlights.

I also thought about science, especially in medicine, where we keep moving to the edge of overrunning our headlights. Most recently I thought about it in relationship to the face transplants that are taking place. At the present time only a partial face transplant has been done, but a number of our medical centers around the world are prepared to attempt a full, facial transplant. While this is an amazing development, there are some interesting issues that begin to surface related to the procedure. Just imagine needing a new face, going to sleep, and waking up with who knows what. I mean you don't get to pick and choose what face you get and for many of us the one we already have is bad enough. Just suppose you went to sleep and woke up with your new face and you had received a transplant from Yasser Arafat. I am not saying he was ugly, but it is inarguable that he was different. Then the bigger problem is that potentially your body could reject your face. Now

what are you going to do? It just seems that scientifically it might be good to tap the brakes rather than overrun our headlights.

A final area of concern has to do with the finite nature of baby boomers. This year a lot has been written and publicized about baby boomers as they begin to step into senior adulthood. The statisticians tell us that beginning January 1, 2006, and every day through the year and into the years ahead about 8,000 people a day in the U.S. will be turning 60. Now the problem with this is that baby boomers have been schooled traditionally and theoretically into thinking that they can do anything, solve any problem, accomplish any task, remove any obstacle, and because of their own brilliance are basically invincible and immortal. The problem is that they may have been thinking for years that they can do anything, overcome any problem, and for many of them they are now looking square in the eye at their own mortality.

The Scripture says, "It is appointed to a man once to die." This is true for boomers, busters, Xers, and for whoever else comes down the line. Life is not infinite except as provided by God. This life will conclude and if you have been living and thinking all along that your days are limitless, it would be wise to pause and

understand the small, frail capsule of time in which you live. Otherwise, you may be in a position of outrunning your headlights or in this case rushing on to the grave unprepared, but therein is the good news.

God has provided for us what we cannot provide for ourselves. It is found repeatedly through the Scriptures, but no more pointedly than in John 3:16 — "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Apart from Christ there is no hope beyond the grave, but in Jesus we have been provided light that extends to eternity. That is nothing short of glorious. Right now it would be good to put on the brakes, slow down, look up, and realize that this very day you can experience life that will never end. How? Romans 10:13 says, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." That's you! That's folks who have always thought they could do everything but can't. That's me! That's folks who have always thought they could figure it out, handle any situation, learn, work, achieve, overcome, and yet apart from God's provisions in His Son Jesus, there is no conquering death.

Today you can know without a doubt that Jesus loves you. He can save you. He will forgive you, and today you can be prepared for everything that is down the road. Slow down, take care of business, do business with God today, and be ready for eternity.

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"Moved with Compassion"

Prayer Memorial Service for Unborn Babies
& Their Mothers

Saturday, January 21, 2006
State Capitol Rotunda
6:00 p.m.



On January 22, 1973, the infamous Roe Vs Wade Supreme Court decision ushered in a holocaust of the unborn that has resulted in the death of over 40 million unborn babies in America.

Are you moved yet?

"Jesus was moved with compassion and He...
healed the sick, raised the dead, taught the people, died for us...
COMPASSION SHOULD MOVE US ALL TO ACTION!"

Pro-Life Mississippi, 810 Interstate Drive, Suite B, Jackson, MS 39211
(601) 955-0235 www.prolifemississippi.org

JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. The Acteens of Bogue Chitto Indian Church, Philadelphia, held a recognition service for their accomplishments for the year. Acteen members shown are Tomika Bell, Whitney Ben, Mariah Hickman, Deanna Robinson, Krystal Robinson, and Felecia Robinson. Melaine Joe, Acteen leader; WMU director, Pam Smith; pastor, Charles Doby Henry.

2. New Hope Church, Foxworth, children's choir presented The Good News Christmas Cruise Dec. 11. Shown are the participants. Choir was led by Donna Ratliff, Charity Nace, Haleigh Parker, and Jenea Thornhill.

3. Bala Chitto Church, Magnolia, recently recog-

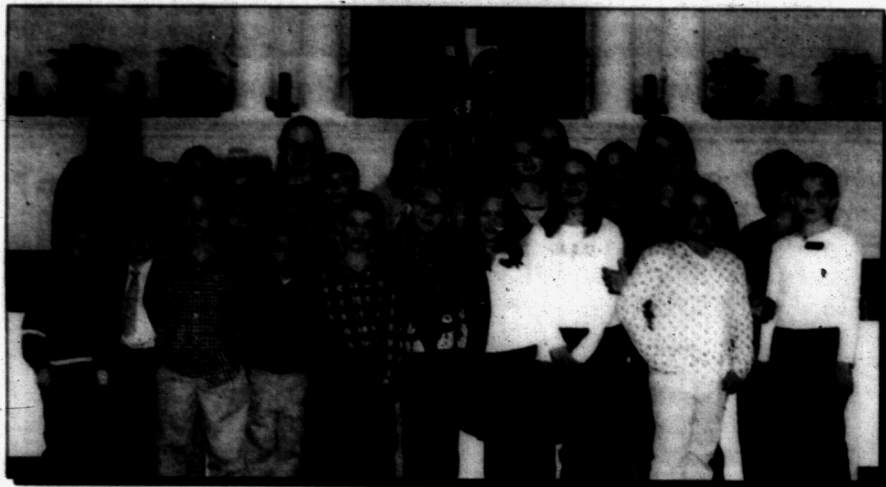
nized Lee Allen, deacon since 1951, and Howell C. Spears, deacon since 1966. Shown are Mary Allen, pastor Dave Hartson, Spears, and Dorothy Spears.

4. Squire Parsons will be in concert at Pelahatchie Church, Pelahatchie, on Sat., Jan. 28, 7:00 p.m. Admission is free. A love offering will be taken. For more information, contact the church office at (601) 854-8809.

5. Forest Church, Forest, will host its 2006 Women's Conference Jan. 27-28, featuring Esther Burroughs and John Elliot. Cost is \$25 if paid by 4 p.m. Jan. 27 or \$30 at the door. For more information, call (601) 469-2206.



1. Acteens, Bogue Chitto Indian Church, Philadelphia



2. Good News Christmas Cruise, New Hope Church, Foxworth



3. Allen Recognized, Bala Chitto Church, Magnolia

Bibliocipher

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R YBPDOK UBKK UBKD-
KWTDK JKWTDK OTZ, PCZ
UBK VTDZ AKMGM YBDR-
MU, EBT MBPVV AGZOK
UBK SGRYX PCZ UBK
ZKPZ -PU BRM PIKPDRCO
PCZ BRM XRCOZTH.

MKYTCZ URHTUBF

WTGD: TCK

Clue: Y = C

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Galatians Two: Twenty.

MS POSITIONS

PRE-K 4 TEACHER NEEDED for Alta Woods Baptist Church Kindergarten/daycare. Experience preferred. Please contact Nina at (601) 372-5188.

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FULL-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC: First Baptist Church, Scottsboro, Alabama, is seeking a full-time minister of music and worship leader. (Sunday am live TV and radio). For more information call (256)

574-3308 or email musicsearch@fbc-scottsboro.org. Send resumes to First Baptist Church, c/o minister of music search committee, 215 South Andrews Street, Scottsboro, Alabama 35768.

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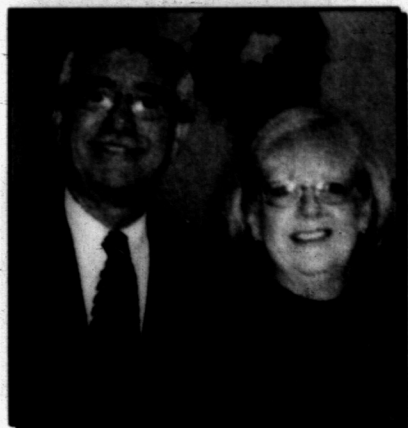


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STATE CHANGES



Williamson and wife Sherry

Immanuel Church, Greenwood, has called Tommy Williamson, Sr., as pastor. He last pastored Chapel Hill Church, Marshall County, Ala. He is a graduate of Mid-America Seminary. He and his wife Sherry have two grown children and six grandchildren.

Joseph Luby will join the staff of First Church, Picayune, Jan. 15, as minister of children and families. Luby and his wife Jennifer will be moving from Fort Worth, Tex., where he was a student at Southwestern Seminary.

Jeremy Paul Jager, Mendenhall, has been called to Macedonia Church, Mendenhall, as minister of youth. He was a student at the University of West Florida and at Co-Lin Community College. David Jager, pastor.

First Church, Brandon, has called Scott Thomas as pastor. Thomas, a native of Natchez, last pastored Beaver Dam Church, Knoxville, Tenn. He holds degrees from South Natchez High School, Mississippi College, and New Orleans Seminary. He and his wife Dacia have six children and one grandchild.

REVIVALS

Bogue Chitto Church, Bogue Chitto: Harvest Night Revival, Feb. 10, 7 p.m.; Danny Lanier, speaker; Michael Gibson, pastor.

Georgetown Church, Georgetown: Revival, Feb. 12-15; Sun., 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; T. E. Nethery, Corinth, speaker; Trent Nethery, pastor.

Puckett Church, Rankin Association: Revival, Jan. 22-25; Sun., 11 a.m., followed by lunch and Sun.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Malcom Ellis, speaker; Cynthia and Donnie Stuart, music; Grant McElveen, pastor.

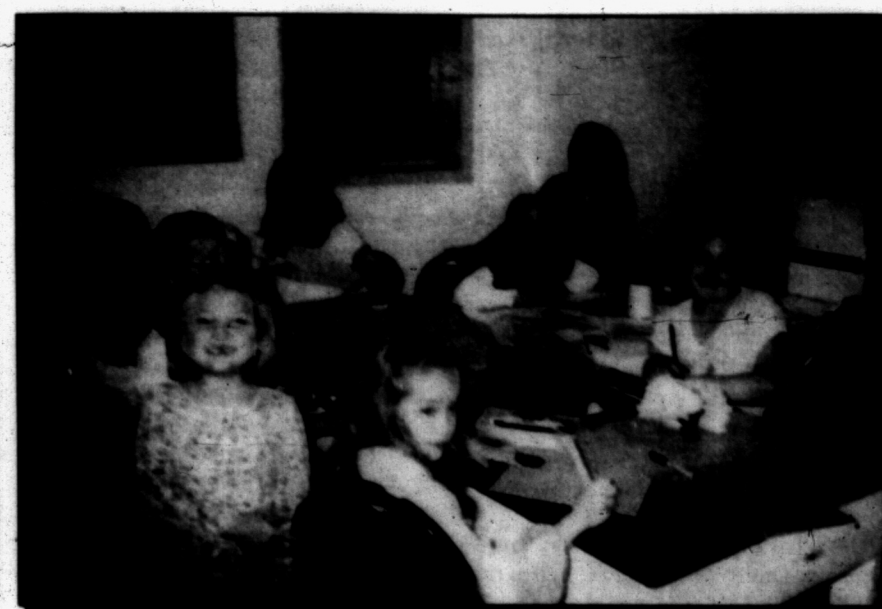
Wyatte Church, Senatobia: Revival, Jan. 29-Feb. 1; Sun., 8:50 a.m., 11 a.m., and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Jim Futral, speaker; Ron Norton, music; Scott Rogers, pastor.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

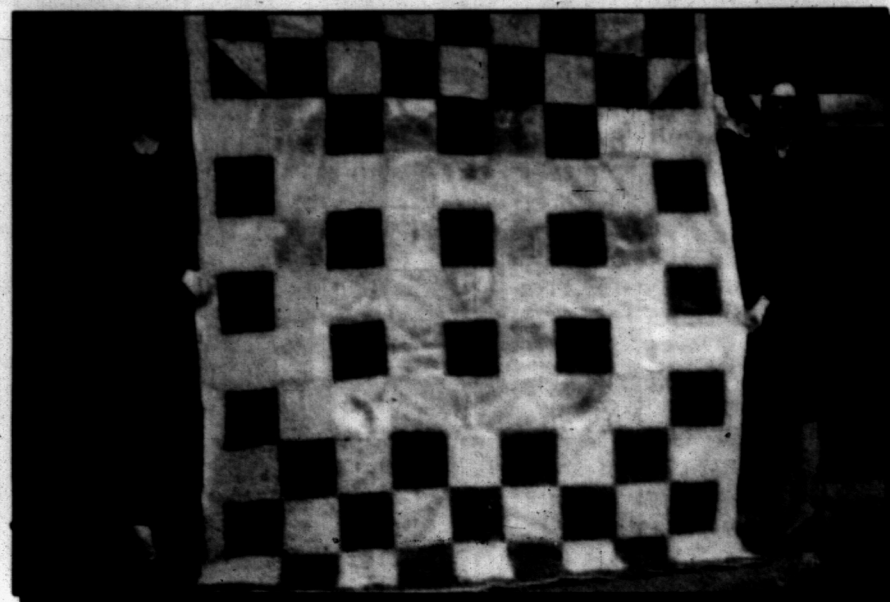


6. White Crosses, Vaiden Church, Vaiden

6. Vaiden Church, Vaiden, placed 50 white crosses in front of the church to represent 50 million babies killed by abortion.
7. The RAs and GAs of First Church, Laurel, raised over \$500 for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering by auctioning a quilt made by the GAs and a print by Eddie Ruth donated to the RAs. Shown holding the quilt are Glenda Hendry and Joanna McKinley, GA leaders.
8. Parkway Church, Houston, recently ordained Brandon Hardin as deacon. Shown are pastor Randy Rinehart, Hardin, and Hardin's grandfather Grady Foster.
9. The children's choir of Clark-Venable Church, Decatur, presented Christmas in Reverse by Kathie Hill and Melody Morris. Alex Craft, minister of music, directed the 86 children.
10. The GAs of First Church, McLaurin, recently completed several mission projects, including Christmas in August and Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. Shown are the GAs.
11. Lakeland Church, Mantachie, held their annual Fall Fest supper, hay ride, and youth skeet shoot. Shown are the youth.
12. Cedar View Church, Olive Branch, will host a community singing Jan. 21, 6 p.m., with The Providence Quartet.
13. Moorhead Church, Mid-Delta Association, exceeded their \$1000 goal for their Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, collecting \$2000. Larry W. Haggard, pastor.
14. Johnston Station Church, Summit, will host a 5th Sunday singing Jan. 29, 1 p.m., featuring The Harrells, Colyell, La.
15. Topeka Church, Jayess, exceeded their \$1200 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal, collecting \$1,541.51.
16. Mt. Pleasant Church, Lincoln Association, exceeded their \$2500 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal, collecting \$3800.
17. East Louisville Church, Louisville, will host The Wells Family Jan. 29, 1:30 p.m. A love offering will be taken.



10. GAs, First Church, McLaurin



7. Lottie Moon Fundraiser, First Church, Laurel



8. Deacon Ordination, Parkway Church, Houston



9. Christmas in Reverse, Clark-Venable Church, Decatur



11. Youth at Fall Fest, Lakeland Church, Mantachie

JUST FOR THE RECORD

18. Crane Creek Church, Pearl River Association, recently ordained Randy Shaw to the gospel ministry and five men as deacons. Shown, from left, are Shaw, Blake Boone, Roger Ladner, Edsel Necaise, Doyle Smith, interim pastor Ernie Sadler, and Bob Alexander.



18. Ordinations, Crane Creek Church, Pearl River Association

19. Morgan City Church, Morgan City, held a This is Your Life day Nov. 13 honoring Truman and Louise Carr for their work at the church.



19. Carrs Honored, Morgan City Church, Morgan City

20. Juniper Grove Church, Poplarville, ordained Eddie Chester as deacon Nov. 20. Shown are pastor John Sapp, Chester, and Donna Chester.



20. Deacon Ordination, Juniper Grove Church, Poplarville

21. The WMU of Bogue Chitto Indian Church, Philadelphia, recently held a garden party as part of their monthly meeting. The group also recognized Hattie Henry as the new WMU director. Shown are the participants.



21. WMU, Bogue Chitto Indian Church, Philadelphia

22. First Church, Poplarville, which sustained damage during Hurricane Katrina and served as a shelter afterwards, set a goal of \$8,500 for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. After the goal was quickly met, it was increased to \$10,000. The church ultimately collected \$19,722.18. Jimmy Albritton, interim pastor.

23. The youth of Pleasant Hill Church, Tippah County, presented the Christmas story to an overflow crowd, under the direction of Kathy Franks. Shown are the participants.

vice, followed by lunch. For more information, call (601) 763-4371 or 763-6500.

24. Centerville Church, Soso, will honor former pastor John Hilburn and his wife Jeri Feb. 12, 10:30 a.m., on his retirement from the ministry. Hilburn will preach at the morning ser-

25. Centerville Church, Tylertown, presented certificates to the following for having read the Bible through in 2005: From left, Nathan M. Firmin, Juanita Firmin, Tommy Johnson, Agnes Smith, Buck Johnson, Karol Fountain, Danny Johnson, Keith Johnson, and Angus Toney.



23. Christmas Story, Pleasant Hill Church, Tippah County



25. Bible Reading Certificates, Centerville Church, Tylertown



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BIBLICAL SOLUTIONS

GuideStone to host retire- ment meeting

GuideStone Financial Resources (formerly Annuity Board) and the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board will host a Retirement Choices seminar on January 24th at 12:15 p.m. at Fairview Church, Columbus. The seminar will immediately follow the conclusion of the Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference, also at Fairview Church.

Retirement Choices is a seminar for those 50 years and older who are investing in a retirement plan through GuideStone. Seminar topics include basic information concerning Social Security, Medicare, and other needs and resources for retirees. A discussion of the various benefit distribution options available to GuideStone participants will be the central focus of the seminar. Time is scheduled for questions and answers.

Those planning to attend are encouraged to contact Robin Nichols at the MBCB office at (601) 292-3226, or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748 1651, ext. 226. E-mail: rnichols@mbcb.org.

OBITUARY

Lynsol B. Richmond, 41, of Booneville, died suddenly Dec. 31 at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Booneville. He was pastor of Thrasher Church, Booneville. Services were Jan. 2 at Thrasher Church with Doc Perkins and Larry Brinker officiating, with burial in Potter Cemetery, Lepanto, Ark. Survivors include his wife of 20 years, Cindy Glover Richmond; and three daughters, Elisabeth Anne Richmond, Sarah Lanay Richmond and Rebecca Grace Richmond.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



26. Mission Trip, Clark-Venable Church

26. **Clark-Venable Church** sponsored a one-day mission trip Dec. 19 to the Bay Side community outside Waveland. 130 people participated, distributing 400 Christmas boxes. Shown are some of the participants.

27. **Liberty Church, Flowood**, held a debt retirement service Jan. 1. Shown are Barry Pounds and Charles Lee; pastor John Cofer is burning the note.

28. **Highland Church, Crystal Springs**, licensed Ben Waltman to the ministry. Shown are pastor David Patterson and Waltman.

29. **First Church, Brandon**, honored their retiring pastor, **Gene Henderson** and his wife, **Dorothy**, with a special celebration at the Hilton Hotel in Jackson Nov. 13. A crowd of 600 family and friends gathered to show their love and appreciation to the Hendersons. The congregation presented an endowment bearing his name in the amount of \$25,000 for ministerial student scholarships at New Orleans Seminary, a book of remembrances, luggage, a cruise of choice, a check for \$5000, a muzzle loader, and the keys to a 2006 Honda truck. Dorothy Henderson received a pearl necklace and matching earrings.



Henderson

30. **Bradford Chapel Church, Calhoun County**, recently elected Carl Booth Denton and George Kent Bingham as deacons. Shown are Booth, Kent, and Jon Haimes, pastor.

31. **Lynn Hickman** was recently ordained as deacon at **Bethesda Church, Terry**. Shown is Hickman, center, with his wife Maxine and interim pastor Michael Johnson.

32. **Easthaven Church, Brookhaven**, will host the Led by the Spirit Morning Conference Feb. 3 for singles, sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Lincoln Association, First Church, Brookhaven, and Easthaven. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., with conference ending at 12:30 p.m. \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door for conference and lunch. For more information, call (601) 833-8111.

33. **Beverly Clark**, of United Blood Services, Hattiesburg, presented **Calvary Church, Waynesboro**, with the Community Service Award for their years of faithfully donating through their semi-annual blood drives.

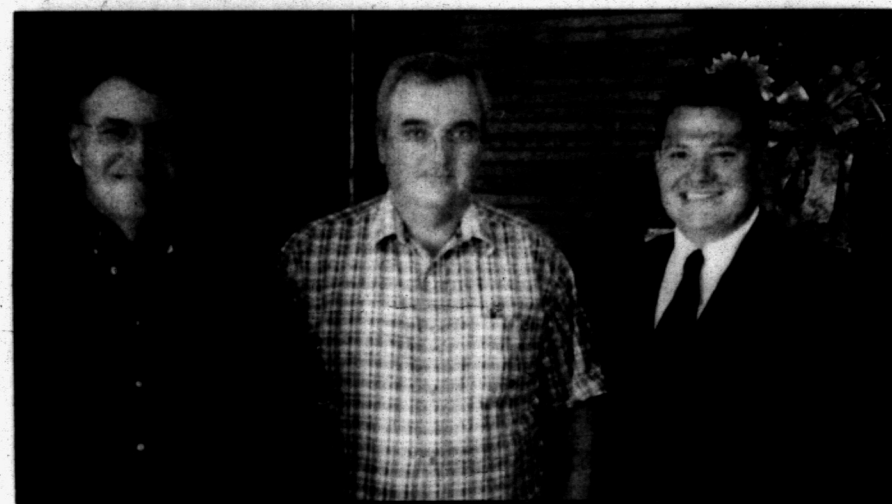
34. **Park Haven Church, Laurel**, will host a benefit Feb. 18 for leukemia victim Elizabeth Reilly, beginning with a barbecue dinner 11 a.m.-2 p.m., a silent auction from 3:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m., and a gospel sing featuring The Magnolia Boys, Hosanna, and others at 6 p.m.



27. Noteburning, Liberty Church, Flowood



28. Waltman Licensed, Highland Church, Crystal Springs



30. Deacon Ordination, Bradford Chapel Church, Calhoun County



31. Deacon Ordination, Bethesda Church, Terry

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A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE CHRISTIAN ACTION COMMISSION OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION • VOLUME 6 • ISSUE 1



By Lee Yancey

Most of us don't care much for pennies. Sure, we know that a penny saved is a penny earned but if we saw one lying on the pavement, would we stoop down to get it? Probably not. We seem to have an abundance of pennies and one more is not going to make a difference. Or, is it? How many pennies does it take before it matters, before it has enough value to be treasured? One hundred pennies would be a dollar. Is that enough? Would we stop to collect one hundred pennies from the

ground? Almost everyone would pick up a dollar bill, but most would not stop and stoop to collect one hundred pennies. It's not that much anyway. Right? What about a thousand pennies? That would be ten dollars and would weigh just over six pounds. Too bulky. We wouldn't want to burden ourselves. That would be a heavy pocketful.

Over the last thirty-three years, since the historic *Roe vs. Wade* Supreme Court decision, millions upon millions of babies have been aborted across America. In fact, this year, the number of babies aborted will surpass fifty million. Fifty million is the combined population of Arkansas,

Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia according to the 2004 census. For the first time since 1973, the Supreme Court, with the possible confirmation of Samuel Alito, may be in a position to overturn *Roe* and when that happens, each state will decide whether or not abortion is legal within its boundaries. Mississippi is one of fifteen states which has state supreme court decisions (*Pro-Choice Mississippi vs. Fordice* 1998) which have explicitly or implicitly created a state constitutional right to abortion. While Mississippi has an abortion prohibition on the books, it is

likely unenforceable due to the *Fordice* case. The Christian Action Commission and other pro-life groups are seeking a constitutional amendment that says a right to privacy does not include a woman's right to an abortion. When *Roe vs. Wade* is overturned, we do not want our Mississippi constitution left to court interpretations.

How can we bring attention to the fact that abortion is, in fact, killing babies? How can we do something that will make a difference for generations to come? The Christian Action Commission and the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board are proposing that each church, Sunday School class, youth group or missions organization save their pennies. They are in abundance and multiply like coat hangers. Our goal is to collect fifty million pennies to represent the fifty million babies aborted since 1973. Fifty million pennies is five hundred thousand dollars. We are still analyzing the logistics and it is possible that on the northwest corner of the Baptist Building property, engineers will be designing a container to hold the estimated 156 tons of pennies. Yes, it will

weigh 312,000 pounds when it is full. The money will be placed in an account with the Mississippi Baptist Foundation and the interest each year will be used for Mississippi pro-life causes. Some of the money might go to purchase sonogram machines for crisis pregnancy centers while other monies might be used for abstinence education to help with the problems of infant mortality, teen pregnancy, and abortion.

Some might say that a penny is insignificant, but it has value. Fifty million pennies are very valuable, just as every baby with a heartbeat who never had a chance to take her first breath is valuable. The time is overdue for this heinous procedure to be banned. We will announce in the near future a kickoff for this incredible project. In the meantime, save your pennies and we will ask you to bring them to the Baptist Building at a later date. Let's work together to save the babies.

Yancey is a consultant with the Christian Action Commission. He can be reached at lyancey@christianaction.com.

COLLEGE AND SEMINARY NEWS



Guitar Ensemble, WCC



WCC, Bulgarian Concert

Hardy Church, Grenada, has awarded a scholarship to Jack Daniel Napier of Blue Mountain College. The William R. Ross Memorial Ministerial Scholarship Fund has given 39 scholarships to ministerial students since inception in 1977.

Nadejda Viaeva, Bulgarian concert pianist, will perform in concert Jan. 24 at 7:30 p.m. in the Smith Auditorium on the William Carey College campus in Hattiesburg. Reservations for the concert can be made by calling (601) 318-6179 in advance and tickets will be available at the door. Tickets are \$10 general admission, \$7 for students and senior citizens.

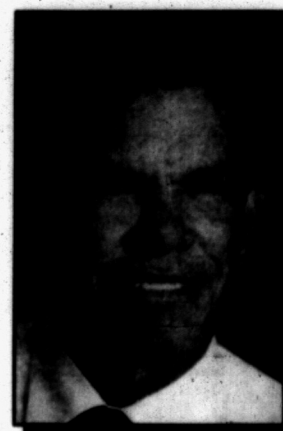
M. Geinene Carson, artist and missionary with International Christian Mission Agency Operation



Carson

Mobilization (OM), will receive the William Carey College Distinguished Young Alumnus of the Year Award at Homecoming ceremonies to be held on the Hattiesburg campus January 21.

Naul Bodden, owner of NCB Consulting Ltd, a local financial consulting company in Cayman, will receive the William Carey College Distinguished Alumnus Award at Homecoming ceremonies to be held on the Hattiesburg campus January 21.



Bodden

The William Carey College Guitar Quartet will perform in concert January 26 at 7:30 p.m. in the Lucile Parker Gallery located on the Hattiesburg campus. The concert will feature works from various periods including works by Boccherini, Dvorak, Machado, Brouwer, and Dyens. Tickets are \$7 for general admission and \$5 for students and senior citizens. Tickets may be purchased at the door. For more information call (601) 318-6175.

Trustees offer support for WCC pres.

HATTIESBURG, Ms. (Special) — Trustees of Baptist-affiliated William Carey College (WCC) in Hattiesburg have unanimously affirmed the leadership of the school's president, Larry Kennedy, after the recent disclosure that he is suffering from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's Disease.

"The WCC board of trustees prayerfully supports Larry Kennedy in his role as president as long as he can serve," said trustee chairman Steve Greenhaw of Amory. "We have great appreciation for his leadership and the vision that he has realized in his eight years as president."

The four-year college's employees also expressed support for Kennedy. "When the faculty and staff were informed of Dr. Kennedy's medical condition, their spontaneous gesture of concern and appreciation resulted in a unanimous resolution of support of Dr. Kennedy for as long as he chooses to remain as president," said Tommy King, executive vice-president.

Kennedy can be contacted at 498 Tuscan Avenue, Hattiesburg, MS 39401. E-mail: pres@wmcarey.edu.



36. Deacon Ordination, Calvary Church, Smithdale

35. Baptist Health Systems Samaritan Counseling Services will host two workshops titled Health Ministries: Congregational Responses to Wholeness and Health Feb. 16. The first workshop is 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. at Epworth United Methodist Church, Jackson, and the second is from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Baptist Medical Center private dining room, Jackson. The purpose of the workshops will be to envision and implement health ministries in the local church, look at the health needs of a church congregation and its community, and identify resources for initiating and implementing ongoing health ministries. For reservations call (800)

378-7613 or (601) 973-1697. There is no fee.

36. Calvary Church, Smithdale, held deacon ordination services for Herman Wheat and Gerald Wicker. Shown are Wheat, Wicker, front, and the deacon body of Calvary, with pastor Chad Carney and guest.

37. The Hispanic mission at Sunflower, Iglesia Nueva Vida y Esperanza, ordained its new pastor, Esteban Martinez Dec. 4. Shown, center, is Martinez.

38. Goss Church, Columbia, children's choir presented the Christmas musical, The Next Noel, Dec. 11. Shown are the participants.



37. Hispanic Mission, Sunflower



38. Children's Choir Musical, Goss Church, Columbia

New Orleans Seminary offers bivo music classes

January 16 began the third of eight courses at seven locations in Mississippi sponsored by New Orleans Seminary.

The eight courses are: Song Leading, Worship Planning, Reading Music: Rhythm/Pitch, Reading Music: Harmony/Melody, Hymnology, Music Administration/Staff Relations, Survey of Music Resources, and Class Voice.

These courses are designed to provide basic training for bivocational music directors and other music leaders in churches.

The eight courses meet two hours per week. Each course is eight weeks in length.

The cycle of courses is scheduled over a two-year period. Each course is independent and has no prerequisite. Each student who completes the eight courses earns a Church Music Certificate from New Orleans Seminary plus a credit of eight hours toward an on campus degree program. There is a one-time registration fee of \$25.00. The cost of each course is \$125.00.

A \$60.00 scholarship is available for all first-time students. Students already enrolled are not eligible. The grant is limited to one person per church.

The third course, Reading Music: Rhythm/Pitch, will meet once a week for two hours for eight consecutive weeks at the following locations and times:

- Broadmoor Church, Madison — beginning January 16 (7-9 p.m.). Jimmy McCaleb, teacher, (601) 924-1233
- First Church, Booneville — beginning January 16 (7-9 p.m.). LuAnne Ford, teacher, (662) 728-6272.
- Northcrest Church, Meridian — beginning January 16 (6:30 - 8:30 p.m.). Buddy McElroy, teacher, (601) 681-6615, (601) 679-1887.
- Hernando Church, Hernando — beginning January 16 (7-9 p.m.). Barry Tweedy, teacher, (662) 429-6361.
- Tri-County Associational Building, Columbia — beginning January 17 (6:30-8:30 p.m.). Jimmy McCaleb, teacher, (601) 924-1233.
- First Church, Greenville — beginning January 17 (7:00-9:00 p.m.). John Burke, Teacher, (662) 334-9452.
- Winston Associational Building, Louisville — beginning January 16 (7-9 p.m.). Dave Tribble, teacher, (662) 773-3969.

These classes could be offered at other locations in the state also, where 8-10 students are interested in enrolling.

There is still time to register for the current course offering. For more information,

contact Jimmy McCaleb at (601) 292-3273 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 273. E-mail: jmccaleb@mbcb.org.

Evang. Conference clarifications

Planners of the 2006 Mississippi State Evangelism Conference, scheduled for January 22-24 at Fairview Church, Columbus, have requested clarifications on a number of conference items:

- Registration will open at 8 a.m. on January 23, and the Senior Adult Conference will be held from 9-10 a.m. on January 23 prior to the 10:30 a.m. Senior Adult Evangelism Rally. Conference planners are concerned that senior adults may be under the impression that their program begins at 10:30 a.m. with the rally. It begins at 9 a.m. with the Senior Adult Conference.

- The Pray Over Columbus program, part of the women's track, will begin at 9 a.m. in the Fairview Church fellowship hall with instructions and directions. The speaker portion of the women's track, which will feature Page Hughes and Janet Rayford, will begin with the luncheon at 11:30 a.m.

- Directions to Fairview Church may be found at www.fairviewcolumbus.org.
- For overnight accommodation information, contact the Wingate Inn in Columbus, which is serving as the conference's host hotel, at (662) 327-9999. Rooms are reserved in a block titled, "MBCB Evangelism Conference." The contact person is Nicki Cole.

- The Ministers' Spouses Luncheon, to be held at 11:30 a.m. on January 23, will be free of charge for ministers' spouses. For all others, the cost will be five dollars.

- Golden Triangle Association, which is headquartered in Columbus, will sponsor the Golden Triangle Regional Evangelism Rally at 7 p.m. on January 22 at Fairview Church, in conjunction with the Evangelism Conference. For more information of the Evangelism Rally, contact Golden Triangle Association at (662) 328-6802. E-mail: gtba@ebicom.net.

- For more information on the Evangelism Conference visit www.mbc.org and click on "State Evangelism Conference" in the Featured Events section. Contact: Laura Marler in the State Missions Office at (601) 292-3231 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 231. E-mail: lmarder@mbcb.org.

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Does Character Matter?

Proverbs 4:23-27; 6:16-19; Matthew 15:16-20

By Don Hicks

Proverbs answers the question "does character matter?" when Proverbs 4:23 says: "Above all else guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life," [NIV]. "Above all else" means we are to give top priority to maintain good Christian character. To maintain good Christian character we will have to guard our heart. Here "heart" refers to the wellspring of our volitional moral behavior.

This concept can be hard for us to understand. This is the concept at the center of what Jesus had just taught when "Peter replied to Him, 'Explain this parable to us,'" Matthew 15:15. Peter was asking for an explanation but according to Matthew 15:12 "the Pharisees took offense when they heard Jesus say 'Listen and understand: It's not what goes into the mouth that

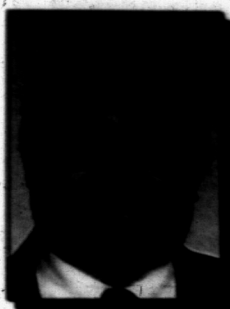
defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man,'" Matthew 15:10-11 [HCSB].

When Peter asked for an explanation Jesus chided him saying, "Are even you still lacking in understanding?" Matthew 15:16. Jesus considered it a basic principal "That whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body," Matthew 15:17. Both Peter and the Pharisees should have known Isaiah's prophesy from Isaiah 29:13 which Jesus quotes in Matthew 15:8-9:

"These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

"They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men."

Isaiah's prophesy not only fit the first century but also fits our



Hicks

21st century America. In America tolerance is taught that accepts any culture or persons teachings as equal and to be accepted by everyone, including Christians, as having equal value. As we seek to move our hearts closer to God many will react with the same

anger displayed by the Pharisees in Matthew 15:12. And all of us at times identify with Peter when he asked Jesus to explain this teaching.

Jesus explained to the disciples that it is what comes out of the mouth that could make one spiritually unclean, because what comes from our mouth comes from our heart. In this teaching I believe Jesus means all of our actions and attitudes as well as words come from our mouth because of what is in our hearts.

To try to help explain the evil that comes from out hearts Jesus lists examples. These examples of evil include evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false

testimony, and slander. This list comes from the 19th verse as translated in the NIV. I do not believe that Jesus was trying to give a comprehensive list of evil or sin but instead gave sample of evil thought and sin.

If you honestly look at this list you may begin to notice as I do that some of those things have entered my life from time to time. Romans 3:23 reminds us "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." I need God's forgiveness for the evil in my heart and the Holy Spirits help to over come it. The good news is that Christ wants to forgive me and enable me to break free of the enslaving power on evil in my heart.

The writer of Proverbs tells us to "keep your feet away from evil," Proverbs 4:27 [HCSB]. He says "Let your eyes look forward; fix your gaze straight ahead," Proverbs 4:25 [HCSB]. From our New Testament guided view we can know that our eyes are to be fixed on Jesus Christ. The Bible gives us a great deal of help as to what we will avoid if we "Carefully consider the path for

your feet, ... Don't turn to the right or to the left; keep your feet away from evil," Proverbs 4:26-27 [HCSB].

In Proverbs 6:16-19 tells us there are "Six things the Lord hates; in fact, seven are detestable to Him:"

1. Arrogant eyes
2. A lying tongue
3. Hands that shed innocent blood
4. A heart that plots wicked schemes
5. Feet eager to run to evil
6. A lying witness who gives false testimony
7. One who stirs up trouble among brothers.

Jesus said "These are the things that defile a man, but eating with unwashed hands does not defile a man," Matthew 15:20 [HCSB]. We need to be aware of the warning Jesus gave the Pharisees "you have revoked God's word because of your tradition," Matthew 15:6 [HCSB]. To avoid this pitfall we must use the standard of God's Word to guide our paths.

Hicks is a member of First Church, Clinton.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

"Live as a Godly Neighbor"

Romans 13:1-10, 12b-14

By Shirley Heap

We have had opportunities to witness examples of good neighbors since Katrina hit our coastline. This lesson gives us scriptures on living as good neighbors by being a good citizen, doing right toward others, and exhibiting high morals. Paul admonishes Christians to show all these characteristics to the world. Our society today seems to use their religious ideas as tools to fight against the laws of the land. God wants His people to certainly stand for their beliefs, but to be good citizens in all matters. Jesus spoke of an unusual neighbor in Luke 10. This covers much territory

as He said, "The one who showed this man mercy in his time of need." We are not seeking to find a neighbor, but to be a Godly neighbor wherever needed.

Be a Good Citizen,
Romans 13:1-7

Paul says, "Everyone be submissive to governing authorities." This is all-inclusive. Why did Paul include this in his teachings to Christians? In the next Scripture he tells us there is "no authority outside of God Himself." What if a totally ungodly person goes into a place of authority? As believers it is our responsibility to follow



Heap

the law and live peaceable as possible.

"The powers that exist are instituted by God," Paul says in this same passage. Obedience is always required, even as a believer, unless the law is contrary to the commands of the Bible. Government

and laws are for our own welfare. Quoting from same passage, "The law is not a terror to those who obey," but only to those who wish to do evil or hurt others. The law is our protection. For this reason, we are responsible to meet our obligations as a citizen. Taxes, respect, and honor are the very things Jesus taught His disciples.

Treat Others Right,
Romans 13:8-10

Fraud and scams take many forms in our culture today.

"Owning no one" comes under this umbrella. This is not referring to a normal debt, but refusing to pay our debts, or taking advantage of loopholes, to avoid having to pay. So quickly, Paul brings in the law of love. Why? When love for our fellowman is foremost all other laws or commands are fulfilled. Fair treatment of others is not only taught by Paul, but by the Master Himself. All these commands concerning our fellowman (adultery, murder, stealing, coveting, and any other) are summed up by this: "Love your neighbor as yourself." (vs. 9) How beautiful the world would be if all Christians walked in pure love. Many court dates would be eliminated; as love would fulfill many of the laws.

Exhibit High Morals,
Romans 13:12b-14

Paul begins his urgent appeal of this message in these

verses. It is spoken to believers strongly, so let us wake up from our sleep. Our lives as Christians are being watched by unbelievers; so Paul stresses throwing off our unrighteous deeds, and let the Light of Christ shine through. Others expect high morals from Christians, so let's not disappoint them.

In an office one morning, dirty jokes are going around. A Christian employee walks in. All become very quiet. Wonder why? This should be an everyday occurrence in a Christian's life. Not to show a "holier than thou attitude," but to have the radiance of Christ in one's life that others might recognize it. As Christ lives in us, the desires of the flesh subside. Thank God for His Son, who came to show us the Way?

Heap is a member of Calvary Church, Waynesboro.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a Jpeg file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing.

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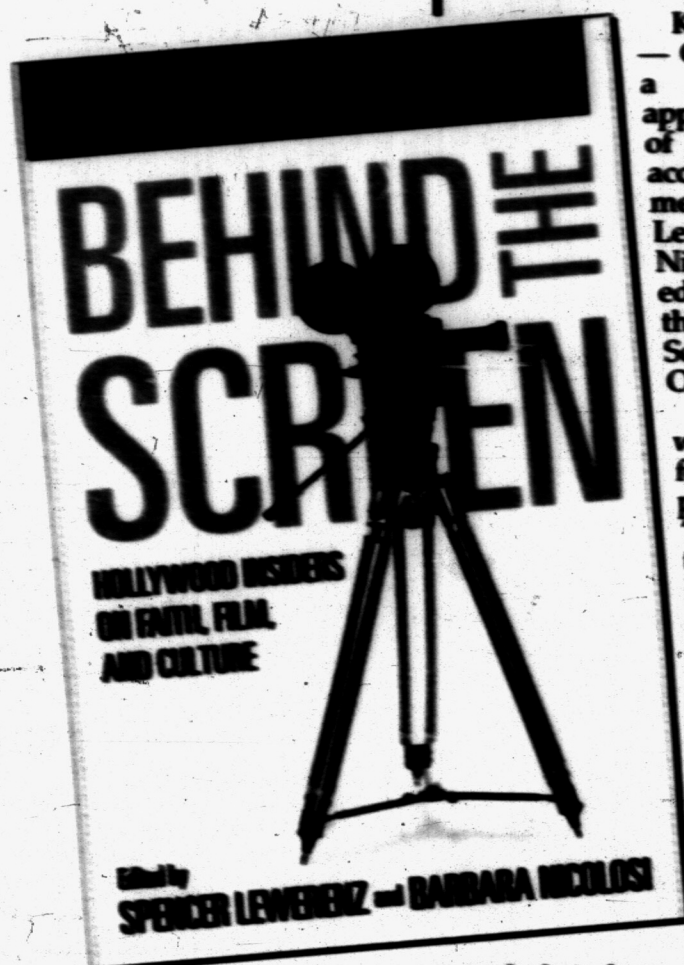
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Record

Analysis: Book eyes Hollywood, Christians

By Phil Boatwright
Correspondent



KANSAS CITY, Kan. (BP) — Generally speaking, when a book on Hollywood appears in the religion section of a bookstore, its theme is accusatory of the entertainment community. Spencer Lewerenz and Barbara Nicolosi have taken a decidedly different approach in their book, *Behind the Screen: Hollywood Insiders on Faith, Film, and Culture*.

Lewerenz, a Hollywood writer/editor, and Nicolosi, founder of Act One, a non-profit organization to train "artist-apostles" for positions within the industry, have gathered the thoughts of Christian writers, producers, and executives who are living out their faith at movie sets, studio offices, and TV networks.

Their aim: to help those who want to be in the movies and those who just like going to them. The book is a cautionary guidepost for those coming to L.A. in order to

seek their fortunes or witness to the lost, as well as a source of insight for how those outside the industry can impact people inside.

Lewerenz and Nicolosi's volume spans 18 essays by media professionals, including Ralph Winter, executive producer of *Fantastic Four*, *X-Men*, and *I, Robot*; Barbara Hall, executive producer of *Joan of Arcadia*, *Judging Amy*, and *Chicago Hope*; Scott Derrickson, director of *The Exorcism of Emily Rose*; Ron Austin, writer for the original *Mission: Impossible* and *Matlock*; and Thom Parham, writer for *Jag* and *Touched by an Angel*.

In a chapter titled, *Love the Cinema, Hate the Sin*, Jonathan Bock, president of the Grace Hill Media public relations firm that focuses on entertainment that shares the beliefs of religious Americans, writes of the need to support Hollywood's good, not just reject its bad.

"We as Christians have basically abandoned mainstream arts and entertainment over the last several decades... We of the lineage of Michelangelo, Raphael, Shakespeare, Lewis, Tolkien, and Caravaggio. There was a time when Christians were the undisputed masters of art and literature... Instead of slogging it out in the rough and tumble environment of pop culture, we Christians have instead created our own subculture of Christian radio, books, television, and film. Mainstream culture has moved on without us, and the world of entertainment has coarsened in our absence."

Bock notes, "Changing Hollywood will require two virtues Christians habitually lack — patience and persistence. We'll need to set our eyes on the long-term prize of righting the ship of mainstream culture by bailing it out one bucket at a time. But we'll get there, and one day in our lifetimes, the world will marvel at our great works once more."

The title of the chapter by Karen and Jim Covell — she a television producer, he a composer — emphasizes the need for Christians to see Hollywood as, *The World's Most Influential Mission Field*.

"Only about two percent of media professionals go to church or synagogue," the Covells write. "Hollywood is an isolated society, ignorant of — and often hostile to — Christianity."

The husband and wife team nevertheless remind, "The media shapes the hearts and minds of people around the world... If we minister to Hollywood, we will be ministering to the whole world."

TV writer and media professor Thom Parham, author of a chapter on "Why Do Heathens Make the Best Christian Films?"

writes that "Christian filmmakers seem to believe that they do not have to compete in the mainstream market. Thus, storytelling and production values end up taking a backseat to the movie's message. The films are merely bait to lure viewers to a homily or altar call, and this only ensures their failure."

Parham utilizes the film *Places in the Heart* as an example of how a secular filmmaker used subtlety, artistry, and depth to reveal characters affected by their religious stance. "Though *Places in the Heart* is a metaphor for the kingdom of heaven," he writes, "nowhere is this notion communicated overtly. It is suggested through the film's system of metaphors and reinforced by its enigmatic ending. This is yet another reason non-Christians make the best Christian films: they understand that cinema is an art form of symbol and metaphor."

Parham points out that Jesus used parables to help his audience understand heavenly principles, whereas Christian filmmakers "are more concerned with messages than metaphors" and thus are "doomed to make bad films."

Novelist and screenwriting teacher James Scott Bell defends Christians who go to movies in a chapter titled, *In Defense of the Christian Movie Buff*.

"Like all great art, great movies can be a healing balm for us as individuals and as a society," Bell writes. "God is the author of beauty, and when we experience beauty in the form of art, a doorway opens through which God can enter into our lives. Movies can inspire."

Editor's note: Behind the Screen: Hollywood Insiders on Faith, Film, and Culture published by Baker Books, is available at most major book outlets. For more information concerning Act One, go to their website at actoneprogram.com.

Phil Boatwright reviews films from a Christian perspective and writes about Hollywood's influence on the American culture. For more information, check out his website at moviereporter.com.

Joyce Rogers pens biography on husband Adrian



NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — There is no better expert on the late Adrian Rogers than his wife and lifelong sweetheart Joyce, who through grade school, high school, college, and 54 years of marriage experienced the highs and lows of life alongside him and was the sounding board for his deepest thoughts.

She has recorded her unique perspective in *Love Worth Finding: The Life of Adrian Rogers and His Philosophy of Preaching*, a biography released by Broadman & Holman Publishers prior to Rogers' death Nov. 15 after a battle with cancer and pneumonia.

Joyce Rogers lovingly recounts her husband's beginning in the ranks of the ordinary, where in junior high school he was known as "unruly and belligerent."

"He had an overdose of courage and the ability to fight with his fists," she wrote. "He had gained a reputation of being one of the toughest kids

in school. He would challenge others to a fight just for an expression of what must have been an inner turmoil."

The third child of working-class parents, Rogers yielded his life to Jesus at age 14 after some neighbors invited his family to a crusade at a local Baptist church in his hometown of Palm Beach, Fla. Rogers followed his father down the aisle and made a profession of faith, and his life was immediately changed.

"Adrian often has said that if it were not for Jesus and His transforming grace that he would not be a nice person to live with and may have even ended up in prison."

Rogers was captain of his high school's championship football team and received several honors including a scholarship to play at Stetson University in Florida. Yet during those years, he sensed God was calling him to preach.

"When I was younger attending Sunday School, I was asked by the teacher to lead in prayer," he said in the book. "I felt so inadequate that I declined to do so. This embarrassed my teacher and me. I was not afraid of much that moved on the football field, but the thought of public speaking or praying was another matter. I did not think of myself as having any verbal gifts at all."

Joyce was standing by Rogers' side the night he stepped forward during a retreat at Ridgecrest, the LifeWay conference center in North Carolina, to publicly declare that God

had called him to preach the Gospel. "He recalls I squeezed his hand as we walked out of the meeting that night indicating that I was pleased with his decision."

After years of being faithful at smaller churches, he was pursued by the pastor search committee of Bellevue Church in Memphis. Having grown to love the people he was serving at First Church in Merritt Island, Fla., Rogers told the committee, "I'm honored that you would be interested, but I've absolutely no inclination to leave my present pastorate."

The committee persisted, and what some would call a divinely appointed misunderstanding led to Rogers succeeding Ramsey Pollard as pastor of Bellevue in 1972. The mix-up involved Rogers thinking he was simply filling the pulpit one Sunday at Bellevue while the search committee thought he was preaching in view of a call. They had him leave the auditorium, and the congregation unanimously voted him in as pastor, to his surprise. From then until his retirement in 2005, Rogers grew the membership from 9,000 to more than 29,000 and led in a major relocation and building project, which Joyce covers in the biography.

Editor's note: Love Worth Finding: The Life of Adrian Rogers and His Philosophy of Preaching, is available at LifeWay Christian Stores or other Christian bookstores and online at www.lifewaystores.com.